

A New Chapter Of A Family Legacy

An Interview with Marilisa Allegrini, President; Carlotta Mastella Allegrini, Vice President and Brand Ambassador; and Caterina Sofia Mastella Allegrini, Vice President and Director of Marketing and Communication, Marilisa Allegrini Group



Carlotta, Marilisa, and Caterina Allegrini

EDITORS' NOTE Marilisa Allegrini is the President of the Group that bears her name. She entered the wine sector in 1983 and has worked tirelessly to make Valpolicella known throughout the world, so much so that she earned the nickname Lady Amarone. In the 2000s, she began a policy of expansion that was accomplished first with the acquisition of 100 hectares in Bolgheri and the establishment of Poggio Al Tesoro in 2001, followed by the acquisition of San Polo in Montalcino in 2007. In 2008, she achieved her childhood dream when she bought Villa Della Torre, one of the most precious and exquisite jewels of the Italian Renaissance. In 2017, she was the first Italian woman to appear on the cover of *Wine Spectator*, the world's most influential wine magazine. From 2016 to 2019 she was a member of the Board of Directors of SACE and a member of the Board of Directors of the Consorzio del Brunello di Montalcino. She is still a member of the Board of the Verona Branch of the Bank of Italy, a member of the Board of Directors of the Consorzio per la Tutela dei vini DOC Bolgheri, and a member of the Steering Committee of Fondazione Arena di Verona. In 2020, the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, appointed her Cavaliere del Lavoro (Order of Merit for Labor).

Will each of you discuss your career journeys?

Marilisa: I was raised in northern Italy, with wine all around me, and I was heavily influenced by my father Giovanni's dedication to Italian winegrowing of the highest caliber. I went to university for physical therapy and worked in a hospital for five years, but joined the family business to help build and preserve the legacy my father had built in Valpolicella. With his untimely passing, I became the Director of Sales and Marketing for my family's estate at the age of 28, traveling throughout Italy and the world to share the story of my family's heritage and wines. I worked tirelessly to make Valpolicella known throughout the world, and some people in the industry even nicknamed me Lady Amarone. In the 2000s, I acquired 100 hectares in Bolgheri on the Tuscan Coast and established the Poggio Al Tesoro winery in 2001 with my brother Walter. I was absolutely captivated by the coastal landscape of Bolgheri, and I wanted to find the best fit for grapes that would reflect the variety of soils in the vineyards, working with international varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc along with Italian varieties like Vermentino. In 2007, I expanded to the Tuscan hills of Montalcino when I purchased the San Polo property – these are vineyards where Sangiovese absolutely shines (it's the home of Brunello), and I wanted to explore its fullest potential. In 2008, I got to fulfill a childhood dream when I bought Villa Della Torre,

a 16th-century property in Verona that I used to explore with my father when I was a young girl, running around the vineyards and being absolutely fascinated by the beautiful rooms. This eventually became the headquarters of the Marilisa Allegrini Group, founded in 2024. Now, as the President of the Marilisa Allegrini Group, my journey enters its newest chapter, working with my daughters to continue celebrating exceptional Italian terroir, hospitality, and sustainable winemaking.

Carlotta: My choice of university came from a deep desire to care for people and from a vision of well-being that goes beyond traditional medicine, embracing a holistic perspective in which body, mind, and environment are intertwined. After I completed my scientific studies, I enrolled in the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Florence, while also completing part of my studies at the Sorbonne in Paris, and graduated *magna cum laude* in 2015. While living in Florence, I spent all my free moments among the vineyards of Bolgheri and Montalcino, learning something new every day and becoming increasingly passionate about these projects. To me, these vineyards became places of the heart, as well as ethical and responsible spaces to be protected with the utmost attention and care. My dream is to combine my education and passions to create new hospitality spaces where wine, nature, humanity, art, and holistic well-being can be connected



Poggio al Tesoro Vineyards



Villa Della Torre

– places that generate balance and peace in the people who stay, live, and work there. As the Vice President and Brand Ambassador of the Marilisa Allegrini Group, I work closely with my mother, sister, and the estate teams to cultivate winery and hospitality experiences that bring together these values of connection and balance. I am also a practicing medical doctor, working part-time as a general practitioner in Verona.

Caterina: I graduated with a degree in Philosophy in 2015 and in Philosophical Sciences in 2018 *summa cum laude* from the Vita-Salute San Raffaele University. At the same university, in 2023, I received my PhD in philosophy, and I am still a member of the Centre of Research in Metaphysics and Philosophy of Diaporein Arts. While receiving my education, I was simultaneously working in marketing and communication for my family's wine brands. In 2022, I was honored to be included in the list of 40 Under 40 in the wine sector by *Fortune Italia*. Ever since I was a little girl, I have been interested and engaged in marketing, communication, and event organization, with the aim of uniting the world of wine with the world of art. That's why I love my role as the Vice President and Director of Marketing and Communication of the Group. My approach to the wine industry positions wine not simply as a product, but as a language capable of transmitting heritage, beauty, identity, and emotional connection across generations.

What was your vision for creating Marilisa Allegrini Group?

Marilisa: I founded the Marilisa Allegrini Group in 2024, and it's been an exciting new chapter for our family legacy. The idea came from a desire to highlight the winegrowing regions and Italian culture that are so special to me, and this group encompasses a remarkable set of values and resources that I do not take for granted. We've brought together a multi-generational family business, superb winegrowing areas, a deep appreciation for art and history,

attention to environmental sustainability, and the ability to adapt and evolve with the ever-changing industry. This comes across in our three estates across Italy – Villa Della Torre in Verona, Poggio al Tesoro in Bolgheri, and San Polo in Montalcino. Under the leadership of myself and my daughters, we will continue to safeguard and improve the art of wine production while respecting tradition and embracing innovation – something taught to me by my father from a young age that I still carry with me.

What are the highlights from the Marilisa Allegrini Group's wine portfolios and hospitality offerings?

Caterina: Villa Della Torre in Verona is a beautiful monument of the Italian Renaissance that serves as the headquarters for the Marilisa Allegrini Group and the Villa Della Torre winery, with an exclusive Wine & Art Relais where visitors can stay in carefully restored 16th-century art- or wine-themed rooms. It was conceived as a sanctuary dedicated to the peace of body and soul, sitting at the intersection of architecture, landscape, and wine culture. Here, we have ten hectares of vineyards producing Valpolicella Classico Superiore and Amarone Della Valpolicella Classico, two wines that thoughtfully reinterpret classic tradition. Additionally, the terroir-driven Peaks and Valleys project, created in collaboration with Andrea Lonardi MW, shows off the Veronese identity of Villa Della Torre's vineyards across Valpolicella, Soave, and Lugana with bottlings that are fresh, energetic, and made to meet the modern drinker's palate.

At Poggio al Tesoro in Bolgheri, Le Sondaie is our enotourism facility where visitors can soak in the region's Mediterranean spirit and Costa Toscana terroir. There's no better way to understand where the elegance and complexity of our wines comes from than sitting in the cool Mediterranean breeze and feeling the sea in the air and in the glass, or walking through the vineyards and seeing how the sunshine hits the grapes. Next year, we'll be opening new guesthouses so visitors can extend their experience even further. Our expressive wines are benchmarks for the region, from the Solosole Vermentino that bottles up the Bolgheri sun and sea, to the Dedicato a Walter, a truly special wine made to honor the memory of my uncle who my mother co-founded Poggio al Tesoro with back in 2001.

And San Polo, in Tuscany's Montalcino, is our organic Brunello property that was founded on the principles of sustainability, bio-architecture, and social responsibility. Here, we offer vineyard-to-table hospitality and lodgings that are set right among the vines, welcoming nature into every part of our visitors' experiences. Our guests can enjoy exceptional local cuisine and wine tasting experiences, including library tastings and vineyard walks, while unwinding in the pristine nature of the Tuscan countryside in our guesthouses. Visitors can explore the winery, built according to the principles of sustainable architecture, and see where our highly acclaimed wines are made – like our single-vineyard Podernovi Brunello and our Amphora Vignamasso that highlight the expressiveness of our Sangiovese.

How does the Marilisa Allegrini Group approach its sustainability efforts?

Carlotta: For us, the focus on sustainability is a core value across all of our properties and operations, from how we treat the land to how we care for our people. We look to environmental stewardship as a standard, not an option, because we want to maintain the beautiful vineyards and winemaking traditions for generations to come.

The Marilisa Allegrini Group approaches its sustainability efforts through a comprehensive model that can be seen across each of the estates in their own unique way. We've achieved the Equalitas certification at both Poggio al Tesoro and San Polo, demonstrating our commitment to environmental, social, and economic sustainability. At San Polo in Montalcino, the estate was certified organic in 2017 – and has practiced organic viticulture since 2014 – and it was also the first CasaClima certified winery in Tuscany, a prestigious recognition of our sustainability efforts. At Villa Della Torre, we prioritize low-impact agronomic practices, preserving biodiversity and protecting our natural areas. And at Poggio al Tesoro in Bolgheri, we closely monitor our ecological footprint, from practices in the vineyard such as using cover crops and maintaining biodiversity, and in the winery by utilizing lightweight, 90 percent recycled glass for our bottles.

Do you feel like there are strong opportunities for women in the wine industry, and what role have you played in creating more opportunities?

Marilisa: Absolutely! There has been a lot of progress made in the industry compared to when I first started, when I was one of the few young women in a male-dominated space, especially for a family-owned business in Italy. I wasn't seeing many women around me when I first began traveling the world and selling Valpolicella, but I didn't let that deter me. I was determined to carry on my father's legacy and mission of creating world-class wines, and that spirit is what helped me break barriers and pave the way for other women around me as well. It's so inspiring and encouraging to see the accomplishments coming from women in wine, in areas from marketing and sales to winemaking and grape growing. I'm also proud to have my daughters be the face of the next generation of the Marilisa Allegrini Group, carrying on a legacy of female leadership that will continue to welcome more women into the space.

What makes working with family so special, especially with the mother-daughter relationship?

Carlotta: Working with family is incredibly special because it gives us a deeper connection to everything we do, knowing that we are carrying on the legacy of the previous generations and continuing to build what we want our legacy to be for the generations to come. There's also something so unique about being able to work in places where I've created some of my fondest memories – when I was at university in Florence, I would spend all my free time coming back and hanging out with my mom and sister in the vineyards, and now part of my job is sharing the story of these vineyards and the wines with the world. ●